



Cherokee County
School District

**ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT
RECOGNITION MANUAL**

Dr. Brian V. Hightower
Superintendent of Schools

P.O. Box 769
Canton, Georgia 30169

The Cherokee County School District (CCSD) Academic Achievement Recognition Manual is designed to provide information on ways in which students are acknowledged for their academic accomplishments. Some recognitions are dependent upon school participation, student participation and or academic performance levels. Please contact your local school for current information regarding which recognition programs they participate in annually.

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Elementary School Academic Achievement Awards and Recognition

Elementary schools honor student achievements as follows:

Report Cards--The reporting of student progress to parents follows District procedures and is in accordance with Georgia Statutes, Georgia Board of Education administrative rules, and School Board Policies, rules and regulations. Report cards are issued at the end of every nine weeks of school and cover a period of approximately 45 school days. Report cards are distributed to students for delivery to their parents/guardians according to the annual School District calendar. CCSD Grading Guidelines can be found [here](#).

Modified Curriculum Grades 3-12

Students on a modified curriculum who are assessed using the Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA), will receive grades based on individual needs and connected to grade-level standards on a pre-requisite/entry level. The students will be assessed on their content knowledge and independent level in all academic subject areas. Students with the most significant needs (Engage program) will be assessed on their level of engagement in all academic subject areas. The students will be evaluated using the same reporting procedures as their grade-level peers.

Attendance

Attendance certificates are awarded for the following categories of attendance:

- Platinum Award for Perfect Attendance: For no absences, tardies, or early check-outs.
- Gold Award for Perfect Attendance: For no absences and fewer than five tardies/early check-outs.
- Silver Award for Excellent Attendance: For three or fewer absences and fewer than five tardies/early check-outs.
- Award of Merit for Excellent Attendance: For three or fewer absences.

CCSD Academic Bowl

The CCSD Academic Bowl is a timed competition designed to encourage academic achievement. At the elementary school level competition is open to students in grades 4-5.

CCSD Reading Bowl

The CCSD Reading Bowl is a timed competition designed to encourage reading. Open to students grades four through eight, the CCSD Reading Bowl features questions from books selected by the CCSD Reading Bowl Committee.

Citizenship Award

National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASPP) jointly administer the American Citizenship Award. Model students who receive this prestigious honor inspire and encourage other students to strive to be better citizens. Criteria is established at the local school level.

Georgia Young Authors Writing Competition

Georgia Young Authors Writing Contest encourages students to develop enthusiasm for and expertise in their writing, provides a context to celebrate writing successes, and recognizes student achievement in arts and academics. The competition has been engaging Georgia students for more

than two decades and is open to any student currently enrolled in Georgia's public schools, grades K-12.

Honor Roll

Honor Roll consists of students who earn all A's in each academic subject in grades 4-5 each quarter. Neither participation courses nor conduct is considered to determine Honor Roll.

Junior Beta Club – Division I Grades 4-5

To promote the ideals of academic achievement, character, service and leadership among elementary and secondary school students.

To be eligible for membership for the Junior Beta Club, the student must meet all of the following criteria:

- Earn all A's in all core academic classes in previous and/or current school year – ELA, Reading, Math, Science, and Social Studies
- Achieve a 3 or 4 on the previous year's Georgia Milestones Assessment in ELA and Math
- Exhibit exemplary behavior, character and attitude
- Have no more than 5 unexcused absences in previous and/or current school year

Believing that exemplary student effort and achievement should be encouraged and rewarded, and seeking to cultivate ideals of service and leadership in our citizens of tomorrow, the governing body of the National Honorary Beta Club has instituted this organization for promotion of these ideals and those stated in the Beta Creed. As a member of the Junior Beta Club in Cherokee County, students must adhere to the Beta mission and learn to embrace and embody its four pillars.

Merit List

Merit List consists of students who earn all A's and/or B's in each academic subject in grades 4-5 each quarter. Neither participation courses nor conduct is considered to determine Merit List. If a student is on the Honor Roll, he/she is not included on the Merit List.

Academic Subjects include

Accelerated Intellectual Movement--AIM	Reading
ELA	Science
Mathematics	Social Studies

- Students who receive one of these designations are recognized within the school.

PTA Reflections Contest

PTA Reflections is a nationally acclaimed student recognition program to encourage artistic creativity in the classroom and at home. Students will reflect on a common theme and create original works of art in the categories of dance choreography, film production, literature, music composition, photography and visual arts. Students of all grades and abilities may participate.

President's Award for Educational Achievement

The purpose of this award is to recognize students that show outstanding educational growth, improvement, commitment or intellectual development in their academic subjects but do not meet the criteria for the President's Award for Educational Excellence. This award is not comparable to the President's Award for Educational Excellence and should not be used or seen as a second tier award, for it recognizes a very different type of academic achievement. It is meant to encourage

and reward students who work hard and give their best effort in school, often in the face of special obstacles to their learning.

President's Award for Educational Excellence

The purpose of this award is to recognize academic success in the classroom. To be eligible for this award, students at each award level (elementary, middle, or high school) must meet rigorous requirements for Grade Point Average or School Criteria/Standards and either Standardized Achievement Test or recommendation by a teacher plus one other staff member for outstanding achievement in a core curriculum course.

Presidential Youth Fitness Program

The Presidential Youth Fitness Program provides educators with the necessary tools and information to achieve excellence through quality fitness education and assessment practices. The Presidential Youth Fitness Program was launched in 2012 to phase out the Presidential Physical Fitness Test. This program to assess student fitness levels now provides additional tools and resources to ensure students are fit for life. With an evolved approach, the fitness assessment has moved away from recognizing athletic fitness to providing a barometer on student's health.

To be eligible to receive a Presidential Youth Fitness Award, a student must score in the Healthy Fitness Zone® in at least five test categories of the Fitness Gram assessment.

With the introduction of Fitness Gram, participation in the Presidential Youth Fitness Program is an optional school-based activity.

Science Olympiad

Science Olympiad is one of the premier science competitions in the nation, providing rigorous, standards-based challenges to teams in all 50 states. The vision of Science Olympiad is to increase student and teacher participation in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Science Olympiad events take advantage of the natural curiosity of each student and allow for in-depth hands-on experiences. Events may involve chemistry, biology, physics, engineering, meteorology, astronomy, geology, and more. Some events are academic events where you take a test at the competition. Some events are lab events where you do something hands-on and possibly take a written test as well. And others are building events where you design, build, and test a device and then bring it to the tournament to compete, or possibly even built a new device during the event using the skills learned from participating on a Science Olympiad team.

Social Studies Fair

Local, regional and state social studies fairs annually present exhibitions of student work from grades 5- 12. Each project is designed to show research and conclusions about the study of people and their relationships to their physical and social environment.

Spelling Bee

Spelling bees offer an opportunity for students to exhibit their proficiency in the art of spelling. All students in grades 4-8 will have the opportunity to participate at the school level.

Student Council

Any student meeting the academic eligibility requirement of the respective school may place his or her name in nomination for student council representative. Candidates must follow the guidelines for speeches and posters provided in the nomination/information packet of the respective school.

Elections for student council officers will be determined by the student government by-laws of the respective school. This process will occur in the spring, unless otherwise requested by the Student Council and principal and authorized by the Office of School Operations.

Yes I Can Awards

Each elementary school will award one recipient per grade level to receive the “Yes I Can” Award during your school’s end of the year awards ceremony. The categories you can choose from are below:

- Academics- Write a paragraph describing how your student has made progress/changes that have affected their academic development.
- The Arts- Write a paragraph describing how the student created a project and how it has impacted his/her creativity.
- School and Community- Write a paragraph sharing how the student has impacted his/her school and community.
- Self-advocacy- Write a paragraph describing how the student is using self-advocacy skills to impact his/her education
- Technology- Share the type of technology the student is now using to influence his/her school day.

Department of Special Education will email principals to nominate one overall winner at their school to be recognize at the School Board meeting. Nominating teachers must write a paragraph describing how the student has made progress/changes in the category selected. School staff must confirm with parents that they consent to this public recognition prior to submission to the Department of Special Education. Students will be recognized at a School Board meeting.

Middle School Academic Achievement Awards and Recognition

Middle schools honor student achievements are as follows:

Report Cards

The reporting of student progress to parents follows District procedures and is in accordance with Georgia Statutes, Georgia Board of Education administrative rules, and School Board Policies, rules and regulations. Report cards are issued at the end of every nine weeks of school and cover a period of approximately 45 school days. Report cards are distributed to students for delivery to their parents/guardians according to the annual School District calendar. CCSD Grading Guidelines can be found [here](#).

Attendance

Attendance certificates are awarded for the following categories of attendance:

- Platinum Award for Perfect Attendance: For no absences, tardies, or early check-outs.
- Gold Award for Perfect Attendance: For no absences and fewer than five tardies/early check-outs.
- Silver Award for Excellent Attendance: For three or fewer absences and fewer than five tardies/early check-outs.
- Award of Merit for Excellent Attendance: For three or fewer absences.

Honor Roll

Honor Roll consists of students who earn all A's in each academic subject each quarter/semester. Conduct is not considered when determining Honor Roll.

Merit List

Merit List consists of students who earn all A's and/or B's in each academic subject each quarter/semester. Conduct is not considered when determining Merit List. If a student is on the Honor Roll, he/she is not included on the Merit List.

Academic subjects include:

English Literature/Composition	Social Studies
Mathematics	Spanish I
Literacy Workshop	Physical Education
Science	Connection Classes

- Students who receive one of these designations are recognized within the school.

All-State Band

The Georgia Music Educators Association (GMEA) sponsors an All-State Band annually to showcase the most talented students in the state of Georgia. Students are selected for participation by an extremely competitive audition process.

All-State Chorus

The Georgia Music Educators Association (GMEA) sponsors All-State Chorus to provide Georgia choral students (grades 7-12) an opportunity to rehearse and perform with a large group of singers who have demonstrated advanced skills in the areas of singing and music reading and to work with a renowned conductor.

CCSD Academic Bowl

The CCSD Academic Bowl is a timed competition designed to encourage academic achievement. At the middle level, competition is open to students in grades 6-8.

CCSD Reading Bowl

The CCSD Reading Bowl is a timed competition designed to encourage reading. Open to students grades four through eight, the CCSD Reading Bowl features questions from books selected by the CCSD Reading Bowl Committee.

CCSD Tome Student Literacy Society

CCSD Tome Student Literacy Society provides student competitions across multiple literacies among 6th-12th grade students. Service, collaboration, competition-based club activities, and clean, entertaining, encouraging literature are available to promote self-esteem, leadership skills, character ethics, and nurture critical thinking, creativity, and imagination in the digital age.

Citizenship Award

National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASPP) jointly administer the American Citizenship Award. Model students who receive this prestigious honor inspire and encourage other students to strive to be better citizens. Criteria is established at the local school level.

Georgia Young Authors Writing Competition

Georgia Young Authors Writing Contest encourages students to develop enthusiasm for and expertise in their writing, provides a context to celebrate writing successes, and recognizes student achievement in arts and academics. The competition has been engaging Georgia students for more than two decades and is open to any student currently enrolled in Georgia's public schools, grades K-12.

Junior Beta Club - Division II Grades 6-8

To promote the ideals of academic achievement, character, service and leadership among elementary and secondary school students.

To be eligible for membership for the Junior Beta Club, the student must meet all of the following criteria:

- Earn all A's in all core academic classes in previous and/or current school year – English Lit/Comp; Literacy Workshop, Math, Science, and Social Studies (in Elementary School, gifted resource class is also included)
- Achieve a 3 or 4 on the previous year's Georgia Milestones Assessment in ELA and Math
- Exhibit exemplary behavior, character and attitude
- Have no more than 5 unexcused absences in previous and/or current school year

The governing body of the National Honorary Beta Club has instituted this organization for encouraging and rewarding exemplary student effort and achievement, while cultivating service and leadership in the citizens of tomorrow. As a member of the Junior Beta Club in Cherokee County, students must adhere to the Beta mission and learn to embrace and embody its four pillars.

PTA Reflections Contest

PTA Reflections is a nationally acclaimed student recognition program to encourage artistic creativity in the classroom and at home. Students will reflect on a common theme and create

original works of art in the categories of dance choreography, film production, literature, music composition, photography and visual arts. Students of all grades and abilities may participate.

President's Award for Educational Achievement

The purpose of this award is to recognize students that show outstanding educational growth, improvement, commitment or intellectual development in their academic subjects but do not meet the criteria for the President's Award for Educational Excellence. This award is not comparable to the President's Award for Educational Excellence and should not be used or seen as a second tier award, for it recognizes a very different type of academic achievement. It is meant to encourage and reward students who work hard and give their best effort in school, often in the face of special obstacles to their learning.

President's Award for Educational Excellence

The purpose of this award is to recognize academic success in the classroom. To be eligible for this award, students at each award level (elementary, middle, or high school) must meet rigorous requirements for Grade Point Average or School Criteria/Standards and either Standardized Achievement Test or recommendation by a teacher plus one other staff member for outstanding achievement in a core curriculum course.

Presidential Youth Fitness Program

The Presidential Youth Fitness Program provides educators with the necessary tools and information to achieve excellence through quality fitness education and assessment practices. The Presidential Youth Fitness Program was launched in 2012 to phase out the Presidential Physical Fitness Test. This program to assess student fitness levels now provides additional tools and resources to ensure students are fit for life. With an evolved approach, the fitness assessment has moved away from recognizing athletic fitness to providing a barometer on student's health.

To be eligible to receive a Presidential Youth Fitness Award, a student must score in the Healthy Fitness Zone® in at least five test categories of the Fitness Gram assessment.

With the introduction of Fitness Gram, participation in the Presidential Youth Fitness Program is an optional school-based activity.

Principal's Academic Awards

Awarded at the end of eighth grade to students who earned a yearly average, in grades six, seventh, and eighth grades, of 90.0, in each academic subject throughout middle school.

Science Fair

The Georgia Science & Engineering Fair (GSEF) is Georgia's premier forum for students to showcase their original research, compete for awards, and interact with top-level professional scientists. The science fair system in Georgia serves not only to recognize students for their achievements, but also to prepare students to succeed and flourish in an increasingly complex and highly technical world by becoming problem solvers, critical thinkers, reflective learners, and more productive and influential members of their communities.

The Georgia Science and Engineering Fair (GSEF) is dedicated to encouraging all Georgia's teachers and school districts to incorporate active science and engineering research into their classrooms in order to help students 1) develop a love for science, 2) learn to isolate important problems and to attack and solve these problems within the framework of organized, logical thought, careful research, and a detailed analysis of facts, and 3) showcase and celebrate their achievements.

Social Studies Fair

Local, regional and state social studies fairs annually present exhibitions of student work from grades 5- 12. Each project is designed to show research and conclusions about the study of people and their relationships to their physical and social environment.

Optimist Club Awards for Students in the ACHIEVE PROGRAM

Each year the Optimist Club invites the District to participate in the annual Optimist Awards for middle and high school students in the ACHIEVE Program. The Optimist Club recognizes one student, nominated by their teacher, from each school. Students receive awards in the following categories:

- Most Improved
- Outstanding Achievement
- Positive Attitude
- Other Categories as Determined by Staff

In addition to students being recognized for outstanding achievement, each year the Optimist Club also recognizes one middle school and one high school Special Education ACHIEVE teacher and paraprofessional to receive the "Outstanding Achievement in Education" award.

Spelling Bee

Spelling bees offer an opportunity for students to exhibit their proficiency in the art of spelling. All students in grades 4-8 will have the opportunity to participate at the school level.

Student Council

Any student meeting the academic eligibility requirement of the respective school may place his or her name in nomination for student council representative. Candidates must follow the guidelines for speeches and posters provided in the nomination/information packet of the respective school. Elections for student council officers will be determined by the student government by-laws of the respective school. This process will occur in the spring, unless otherwise requested by the Student Council and principal and authorized by the Office of School Operations.

High School Academic Achievement Awards, Recognition and Honors

Individual high schools may have recognition beyond those listed. Service recognition may be based on the school's affiliation with specific civic and community organizations within their area. All Cherokee County School District recognitions that are determined by GPA will use weighted grades. High schools honor student achievements as follows:

Report Cards

The reporting of student progress to parents follows District procedures and is in accordance with Georgia Statutes, Georgia Board of Education administrative rules, and School Board Policies, rules and regulations. Report cards or quarterly progress reports are issued at the end of every semester and cover a period of approximately 90 school days. Report cards are distributed to students for delivery to their parents/guardians according to the School Board calendar. CCSD Grading Guidelines can be found [here](#).

Attendance

Attendance certificates are awarded for the following categories of attendance:

- Platinum Award for Perfect Attendance: For no absences, tardies, or early check-outs.
- Gold Award for Perfect Attendance: For no absences and fewer than five tardies/early check-outs.
- Silver Award for Excellent Attendance: For three or fewer absences and fewer than five tardies/early check-outs.
- Award of Merit for Excellent Attendance: For three or fewer absences.

Honor Roll

High school students will be placed on the Honor Roll when their weighted NGA is 90 or above.

Academic Excellence Certificate

A certificate recognizing academic excellence is awarded to students who have a cumulative NGA of 90.0 or above at the end of 3 ½ years.

Academic Letters

Academic letters are awarded to students who have maintained a weighted NGA of 90.0 or above each year for 2 consecutive years. Letters are presented in the fall.

All-State Band

The Georgia Music Educators Association (GMEA) sponsors an All-State Band annually to showcase the most talented students in the state of Georgia. Students are selected for participation by an extremely competitive audition process.

All-State Chorus

The Georgia Music Educators Association (GMEA) sponsors All-State Chorus to provide Georgia choral students (grades 7-12) an opportunity to rehearse and perform with a large group of singers who have demonstrated advanced skills in the areas of singing and music reading.

CCSD Tome Student Literacy Society

CCSD Tome Student Literacy Society provides student competitions across multiple literacies among 6th-12th grade students. Service, collaboration, competition-based club activities, and clean, entertaining, encouraging literature are available to promote self-esteem, leadership skills, character ethics, and nurture critical thinking, creativity, and imagination in the digital age.

Cherokee County Scholars Banquet

The Cherokee County Scholars Banquet is held each year in May. The purpose of the banquet is to recognize and honor the Valedictorian and Salutatorian from each high school. Each Valedictorian and Salutatorian invites his/her parents and a teacher of his/her choice who has significantly contributed to the student's academic success.

Cherokee County Who's Who

Who's Who is the principal and faculty's opportunity to recognize seniors who have contributed the most to the school's overall program. Faculty members nominate those students who work publicly and behind the scenes to make all programs distinctive and competitive. Students nominated must have a GPA of at least 90 and be a candidate for graduation at the end of the current school year. After the nominations are compiled, the faculty votes to determine which students have made the most significant contribution to the school.

Citizenship Award

National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) jointly administer the American Citizenship Award. Model students who receive this prestigious honor inspire and encourage other students to strive to be better citizens. Criteria is established at the local school level.

Class Officers/Student Government Association Representative (SGA)

The School Board recognizes the importance of student involvement and representation regarding various aspects of the educational process, especially at the high school level as students are preparing for higher education, work and life.

Accordingly, each high school will establish and maintain an active Student Government Association (also referred to as a School Advisory Board).

The members of the Student Government Association (SGA) will be determined by the student government standards of the respective school. Recommended members are the presidents and vice-presidents of the classes and student council members.

Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Good Citizen Award

The DAR Good Citizens Award and Scholarship Contest is intended to encourage and reward the qualities of good citizenship. This award recognizes and rewards individuals who possess good citizenship qualities of dependability, service, leadership and patriotism in their homes, schools and communities. These students are selected by their teachers and peers because they demonstrate these qualities to an outstanding degree. This program is only open to high school seniors and only one student per year may be honored as a school's DAR Good Citizen.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.dar.org/national-society/scholarships/dar-related>

Georgia Certificate of Merit

University of Georgia (UGA) recognizes 11th grade students who have excelled academically. Juniors who are ranked in the top 5% of their class at the end of their fifth semester receive a Certificate of Merit from UGA.

Georgia Scholar

Pursuant to State Board Policy 160-4-2-.23, the Georgia Scholar Program is an effort by the Georgia Department of Education to identify and recognize high school seniors who have achieved excellence in school and community life. The program is coordinated by the Georgia Department of Education's Excellence Recognition Office and through local coordinators in each public school system and private schools throughout the state.

Georgia Young Authors Writing Competition

Georgia Young Authors Writing Contest encourages students to develop enthusiasm for and expertise in their writing, provides a context to celebrate writing successes, and recognizes student achievement in arts and academics. The competition has been engaging Georgia students for more than two decades and is open to any student currently enrolled in Georgia's public schools, grades K-12.

Girls State/Boys State

Boys and Girls State is among the most respected and selective educational programs of government instruction for U.S. high school students. The program is one in which participants learn about rights, privileges and responsibilities of U.S. citizens in a one-week intensive program. Most programs are held on a college campus and students live in the dorms. The selection process occurs during the junior year and the program takes place between the junior and senior year.

For more information regarding Boys State, please visit: <https://www.legion.org/boysnation/stateabout>

For more information regarding Girls State, please visit: <https://www.alaforveterans.org/ALA-Girls-State/>

Governor's Honors Program (GHP)

Pursuant to State Board Policy 160-4-2-.09, the Georgia Governor's Honors Program (GHP) is a summer residential instructional program designed to provide intellectually gifted and artistically talented high school students challenging and enriching educational opportunities not usually available during the regular school year. Activities are designed to provide each participant with opportunities to acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes to become independent, life-long learners.

Honor Graduates

The distinction of Honor Graduate will be awarded to graduating seniors who have a weighted NGA of 90.0 or above. These students will receive the recognition at graduation.

Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership Program (HOBY)

Founded in 1958, HOBY's mission is to inspire and develop our global community of youth and volunteers to a life dedicated to leadership, service, and innovation. HOBY provides students, for whom most are selected by their schools, to participate in a unique leadership training, service-learning, and motivation-building experiences beginning a lifelong dedication to improving the lives of others. Programs are available for freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.hoby.org/about/programs>

Lamp of Knowledge

The Lamp of Knowledge is awarded to students who have maintained a weighted NGA of 90.0 or above each year for 3 consecutive years. Lamps are presented in the fall.

National Beta Club

The National Beta Club promotes ideals of Character, Service and Leadership among secondary school students, to reward meritorious achievement and to encourage and assist students in continuing their education after high school.

National Honor Society

The National Honor Society (NHS) recognizes outstanding high school students. NHS serves to honor those students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of Scholarship, Leadership, Service, and Character.

National Merit Scholarship Program

The National Merit® Scholarship Program is an academic competition for recognition and scholarships. High school students enter the National Merit Program by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®) in the eleventh grade –and by meeting published program entry/participation requirements.

[Additional Information regarding National Merit can found by clicking here.](#)

National Recognition Program

The National Recognition Program is a College Board program that creates pathways to college for underrepresented students by awarding them academic honors and connecting them with universities across the country. Students must have a 3.5 GPA or higher to be considered and qualify for this program by earning a score of 3 or higher on at least two AP exams or scoring in the top 10% of the state on the PSAT in their Sophomore or Junior year. Students must also identify as Black, African American, Latino, Hispanic, Indigenous, or attend high school in a rural area or small town.

[Additional Information regarding the National Recognition Program can be found by clicking here.](#)

National Technical Honor Society (NTHS)

For over 30 years, NTHS has been the acknowledged leader in the recognition of outstanding student achievement in Career and Technical Education (CTE). The NTHS serves approximately 100,000 active members and nearly a million members since its inception in 1984. NTHS honors the achievements of top CTE students, provides scholarships to encourage the pursuit of higher education, and cultivates excellence in today's highly competitive, skilled workforce. In 2018, NTHS awarded over \$225,000 in scholarships to NTHS members.

For more information, please visit: <https://nthsof.org/>

PTA Reflections Contest

PTA Reflections is a nationally acclaimed student recognition program to encourage artistic creativity in the classroom and at home. Students will reflect on a common theme and create original works of art in the categories of dance choreography, film production, literature, music composition, photography and visual arts. Students of all grades and abilities may participate.

President's Award for Educational Achievement

The purpose of this award is to recognize students that show outstanding educational growth, improvement, commitment or intellectual development in their academic subjects but do not meet the criteria for the President's Award for Educational Excellence. This award is not comparable to

the President's Award for Educational Excellence and should not be used or seen as a second tier award, for it recognizes a very different type of academic achievement. It is meant to encourage and reward students who work hard and give their best effort in school, often in the face of special obstacles to their learning.

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Presidential Youth Fitness Program

The Presidential Youth Fitness Program provides educators with the necessary tools and information to achieve excellence through quality fitness education and assessment practices. The Presidential Youth Fitness Program was launched in 2012 to phase out the Presidential Physical Fitness Test. This new program to assess student fitness levels now provides additional tools and resources to ensure students are fit for life. With an evolved approach, the fitness assessment has moved away from recognizing athletic fitness to providing a barometer on student's health.

To be eligible to receive a Presidential Youth Fitness Award, a student must score in the Healthy Fitness Zone® in at least five test categories of the Fitness Gram assessment.

With the introduction of Fitness Gram, participation in the Presidential Youth Fitness Program is an optional school-based activity.

Principal's Leadership Award

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) and Herff Jones co-sponsor the Principal's Leadership Award (PLA), Recognizing Outstanding Student Leaders for the school year. This scholarship award affords high school principals the opportunity to recognize a student leader by nominating him or her for a national scholarship.

Ray Kroc Youth Achievement Award

The Ray Kroc Youth Achievement Award was created in memory of McDonald's founder to recognize students who have met the challenges that face young people as they grow into productive, responsible adults. Each school selects one senior who has earned the respect of teachers and fellow students through notable contributions to both the school and the community.

The Ray Kroc recipient is someone who gives back by participating in some form of charitable volunteer work through the school or within the community, who is hard-working and self-motivated, who displays integrity, and who sets a good example for his or her peers simply by being a thoughtful, caring person.

STAR Student

STAR student is an academic achievement based primarily on SAT scores. Based on all SAT scores posted through the November test date of the twelfth grade, the student with the highest combined score is identified. The program requires that the scores be equal to or higher than the latest available national average on both the verbal and the math sections. The STAR student must be ranked in the top 10% of his or her class, based on cumulative grades through the junior year.

Ties are permitted at the school, system, and district level; but only one student receives Governor's Scholarship monetary award. The Lions Club sponsors the program locally.

Scholar Athlete

A Scholar Athlete patch is awarded to students who receive an Academic Letter or Lamp of Knowledge and have lettered in a varsity sport.

Scholarships

Numerous academic, athletic, memorial, church and civic scholarships are awarded yearly to deserving students. Many of these scholarships require a formal application process. Students should consult their counselor concerning applying for scholarships. There is a formal recognition of scholarship recipients during the spring of the senior year. Students and parents must notify and present verification for scholarships received in order to be recognized by the school.

Science Fair

The Georgia Science & Engineering Fair (GSEF) is Georgia's premier forum for students to showcase their original research, compete for awards, and interact with top-level professional scientists. The science fair system in Georgia serves not only to recognize students for their achievements, but also to prepare students to succeed and flourish in an increasingly complex and highly technical world by becoming problem solvers, critical thinkers, reflective learners, and more productive and influential members of their communities.

The Georgia Science and Engineering Fair (GSEF) is dedicated to encouraging all Georgia's teachers and school districts to incorporate active science and engineering research into their classrooms in order to help students 1) develop a love for science, 2) learn to isolate important problems and to attack and solve these problems within the framework of organized, logical thought, careful research, and a detailed analysis of facts, and 3) showcase and celebrate their achievements

Social Studies Fair

Local, regional and state social studies fairs annually present exhibitions of student work from grades 5- 12. Each project is designed to show research and conclusions about the study of people and their relationships to their physical and social environment.

Optimist Club Awards for Students in the Achieve Program

Each year the Optimist Club invites the District to participate in the annual Optimist Awards for middle and high school students in the ACHIEVE Program. The Optimist Club recognizes one student, nominated by their teacher, from each school. Students receive awards in the following categories:

- Most Improved
- Outstanding Achievement
- Positive Attitude
- Other Categories as Determined by Staff

In addition to students being recognized for outstanding achievement, each year the Optimist Club also recognizes one middle school and one high school Special Education ACHIEVE teacher and paraprofessional to receive the "Outstanding Achievement in Education" award.

Superintendent's Key Scholar Program

Superintendent's Key Scholar Program is a districtwide academic recognition initiative honoring Cherokee County School District students' achievement starting in grade nine through National Merit Scholarship Finalist qualification in grade twelve. ([See Appendix A for more information](#)).

Teen Leadership Cherokee

Teen Leadership Cherokee is designed to develop the knowledge and leadership skills of Cherokee County tenth graders so they may confidently become our leaders of tomorrow. Participation in Teen Leadership Cherokee will demonstrate that in this transient society, a diverse group of people working together, rather than individually, can be effective in solving the problems faced by the community.

[Additional information regarding Teen Leadership Cherokee can be found by clicking here.](#)

United States Presidential Scholars Program

The U.S. Presidential Scholars Program was established in 1964, by executive order of the President, to recognize and honor some of our nation's most distinguished graduating high school seniors. In 1979, the program was extended to recognize students who demonstrate exceptional talent in the visual, creative and performing arts. In 2015, the program was again extended to recognize students who demonstrate ability and accomplishment in career and technical education fields. Each year, up to 161 students are named as Presidential Scholars, one of the nation's highest honors for high school students.

United States Senate Youth Program

United States Senate Youth Program was created for outstanding high school students to help broaden their knowledge and understanding of Congress and the legislative process in our nation's Capitol; to demonstrate the importance of a freely elected legislature in the perpetuation of an effective democratic system of government; and, to dramatize in particular the crucial role the Senate performs in the maintenance of our government.

Valedictorian/Salutatorian

Pursuant to CCSD Board Policy IHC - Class Ranking, the graduating senior with the highest class ranking as determined by the weighted numeric average, NGA, shall be recognized as Valedictorian. The student with the second highest class ranking, as determined by weighted numeric grade average will be recognized as Salutatorian. The weighted numeric grade average will be calculated to the four decimal places or more until a tie is resolved. **Students participating in Dual Enrollment programs are eligible for Valedictorian or Salutatorian recognition** per statutory requirements. A Dual Enrollment student who moves into the local school system after his or her sophomore year and has not taken any courses on site at the participating eligible high school will not be eligible for Valedictorian or Salutatorian recognition. Transfer credit used for Valedictorian or Salutatorian will be accepted only from an Accredited School in accordance with Board Policy on Awarding Units of Credit and Acceptance of Transfer Credit and/or Grades (JBC(4)).

Wendy's High School Heisman Award

The Wendy's High School Heisman honors both male and female high school students who excel in academics, athletics and student leadership. We want to hear from all student-athletes who work hard, are dedicated, and have become role models for their school's underclassmen!

[Additional information regarding Wendy's High School Heisman can be found here.](#)

21st Century Leaders

21st Century Leaders is a collaboration of business and professional leaders inspiring high school students to take on leadership positions, explore career opportunities, and give back to their communities by connecting them with a diverse group of enthusiastic peers, passionate professionals and powerful ideas, transforming their skills, attitudes, and abilities through training and hands-on experiences.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.21stcenturyleaders.org/student-programs/>

Superintendent's Key Scholar Program

Superintendent's Key Scholar Program supports the Cherokee County School District's Major System Priority of establishing internationally competitive standards for student performance and an accountability system and policy framework designed to ensure that all students are challenged individually and collectively to meet more rigorous standards.

The Superintendent's Key Scholar Program identifies and nurtures high-achieving students, encouraging them to achieve at even higher academic levels. The following grade levels are recognized utilizing the Preliminary SAT 8/9 (PSAT 8/9) or the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT). Students at each grade level listed below meet specific assessment criteria and receive specific Cherokee County School District academic recognition.

High School

- **Grades 9, 10, 11 Superintendent's Key Scholar**

Tier I- 9th Grade scoring at the 85th percentile or higher on the National User Total Percentile in the fall of the current school year

Recognition:

CCSD Certificate of Achievement
School Recognition

Tier II – 10th and 11th Grade scoring at the 90th percentile or higher on the National User Total Percentile in the fall of the current school year

Recognition:

CCSD Certificate of Achievement
School Recognition
Introduction to CCSD Board of Education and Superintendent

Tier III – 10th and 11th Grade scoring at the 95th percentile or higher on the National User Total Percentile in the fall of the current school year

Recognition:

CCSD Certificate of Achievement
School Recognition
Introduction to CCSD Board of Education and Superintendent
Key School cord or tassel or stole
Graduation Recognition

- **Grade 12 National Merit Scholarship Finalist**

PSAT/NMSQT selection index for National Merit Scholarship changes yearly (National Merit Scholarship Corporation determination) based on Grade 11 PSAT score

Recognition:

CCSD Certificate of Achievement
Senior Honor Recognition
National Merit Scholarship Certificate of Achievement
Recognition at Graduation/National Merit Scholarship Medallion

Additional Student Recognition Opportunities

Below are some events/activities that may be available for your child. Please contact your local school for current information regarding which recognition programs they participate in annually.

American Legion Award

The Award Medal represents the educational symbolism of the School Award Medal Program and associates it with The American Legion and its purposes. The medal is applicable for award to either boys or girls in the graduating class of elementary, middle and high schools.

Career and Technical Instruction Spring State Leadership Conference Competition

Career and Technical Instruction hosts the spring conference each year where students from across the state of Georgia are given the opportunity to compete in 27 competitive events representing career pathways. The purpose of this conference is to educate students with disabilities about the resources and career pathways available. The competitive events are an avenue for students to apply their many employability skills of their chosen career pathway and present it to a panel of volunteer judges in that career field. Public speaking, interview skills, leadership skills and the importance of time management are just a few of the elements that each student will participate in at the conference. Student entries and attendance in this event and competition are organized by CCSD Career Technical Instruction Teachers.

Japanese Art Exchange

Each year six elementary schools (one per Zone) are chosen to submit five 2-D paintings or drawings. The school's art teacher selects pieces of artwork which are then sent to Japan in exchange for artwork created by Japan's students. CCSD's student artwork is displayed in Meguro City, Japan and artwork from Japan is displayed at the six selected CCSD elementary schools. Students whose artwork is chosen for the exchange will receive a certificate from Japan when artwork is returned as well as have their artwork displayed at the Cherokee Arts Center during the elementary art show in the spring.

Optimist Club Contests & Awards

The Essay Contest: Young people are given the opportunity to write about their own opinions regarding the world in which they live. The approach can encompass a young person's personal experience, the experience of their country or a more historical perspective. In addition to developing skills for written expression, participants also have the opportunity to win a college scholarship!

Oratorical Contest: The contest is designed for youth to gain experience in public speaking and provide them with the opportunity to compete for a college scholarship. Specific rules are established by the local Optimist Club.

Optimist Award: The South Cherokee Optimist Club annually sponsors "Optimist Awards for Middle/High School Students with Intellectual Disabilities". Recipients are honored each year at a special awards breakfast.

Special Olympics

The Cherokee County Special Olympics Awareness Day provides a glimpse of the year-round sports training and athletic competition for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. Their goal is to help bring persons with intellectual disabilities into the larger society under conditions whereby they are accepted, respected, and given the chance to become useful and productive citizens. As they achieve this goal through their sports program, they demonstrate that Special Olympics has a

unique value: to show the world that every person counts and that every person can be something good when we all work together.

Terrific Kids (Sponsored by Kiwanis Club)

Terrific Kids is a student-recognition program that promotes character development, self-esteem and perseverance. "Terrific" is an acronym for Thoughtful, Enthusiastic, Respectful, Responsible, Inclusive, Friendly, Inquisitive and Capable.

Special Education Awards of Excellence

The Department of Education will be contacting the District's Department of Special Education when the application time is open. Please recognize one outstanding senior in your district who has demonstrated excellence. The Georgia Department of Education will review all applications and identify one winner from each GLRS region. We will be sure to share the winner's information with district leadership.

Excellence might manifest in the following ways:

- Outstanding Academic Achievement
- Outstanding Athletic Achievement
- Innovative use of technology
- Exemplary growth in social and or peer relationships
- Participation in organizations and clubs
- Exemplary participation in the Arts (creative writing, visual and performing arts)
- Exemplary involvement in the community
- Acceptance into one of the branches of the military

The following are some of the questions/information that will be included in the application:

The student has earned or is planning to earn a General Education Diploma with outstanding academic achievement and or extracurricular involvement in school/community, and is transitioning to:

- A college/university
- A technical college
- Full-time employment
- Military
- Career Education

Please provide the details of the student's achievements: Including specific scholarship and college/university/technical school information, academic/career achievements, awards, grade point average, extracurricular activities, life skills, and any other accomplishments of the student as it relates to his/her academic program during high school.

Is there any specific post-graduation information that you would like to share?

Please provide copies of any examples of his/her work, awards received, documentation of completion of career pathways, and/or letters supporting your nomination.

Will an interpreter or translator be needed for a video call? Yes or No

Is the Award of Excellence certificate needed in an alternate format (i.e., Braille)? Yes or No